

REMARKS

The Applicant hereby submits the present Amendment and Request for Reconsideration for the above-referenced patent application, entry of which is earnestly solicited. Claims 1-2, 4, 6, 8-16, 18, and 21-30, of the present application have been amended; claims 3, 5, 7, 17, 19, and 20, of the present application have been canceled. Thus, claims 1-2, 4, 6, 8-16, 18, and 21-30, are pending in the present application.

In the Office Action mailed on 26 November 2004, the Examiner objected to the Specification as failing to provide proper antecedent basis for the claimed subject matter because of a couple of reasons. First, the Examiner objected to the Specification as it relates to claim 8 as reciting “[t]hat the protective layer formed during the definition of the stripe height can comprise lead materials. However, the Specification only discloses that this first protective layer can comprises insulating materials; it is the second protective layer that is disclosed to comprise lead materials. (Page 3, Lines 14-25)” In response, the Applicant amends dependent claim 8 to restrict the materials to only insulator materials.

Second, the Examiner objected to the Specification as it relates to claims 9, 22, and 28 as reciting “[t]hat the protective layers can each have a thickness of about 50-200 Angstroms. However, the Specification discloses that the first protective layer can have a thickness of 100-200 Angstroms, and the second protective layer can have a thickness of 50-100 Angstroms. (Page 6, Line 28; Page 9, Line 18) The total range is not recited in the Specification.” In response, the Applicant amends claim 9 to restrict the thickness of the second protective layer “[t]o a thickness of between 100 – 200 Angstroms.” Also, the Applicant amend claims 22 and 28 to restrict the first and the second protective layers to “[a] thickness of between about 100 – 200 Angstroms.”

In the same Office Action, the Examiner objected to claims 7, 9, 10, 11, and 17-22, because of a formality. Specifically, the Examiner objected to the above-referenced claims as reciting “[p]rior to removing the first photoresist layer.” In response, the

Applicant clarifies the Examiner's objection through the amendment and/or cancellation of claims 9, 10, 11, 17-22. Further, independent claims 1, 12, and 23 have been amended which redefine key terminology used in the Examiner's objection.

In the same Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-10, 12-20, 22-26, and 28-30 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,315,875 to Sasaki (hereinafter "Prior Art Sasaki") in view of U.S. Patent Application No. 2004/0027730 to Lille (hereinafter "Prior Art Lille"). Also, in the same Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 11, 21, and 27, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Prior Art Sasaki in view of Prior Art Lille, and further in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0030443 to Konuma et al. (hereinafter "Prior Art Konuma"). In response, the Applicant respectfully submits that the amended claims are allowable over the prior art of record for at least the following reasons.

Regarding Claims 1-11 Only. First, the Applicant amends independent claim 1 to include the limitation of canceled dependent claim 7, namely "[f]orming a protective layer over a plurality of read sensor layers." Second, the Applicant further amends independent claim 1 to include the limitation of canceled claim 5, namely "[f]orming an insulator around the read sensor where the end portions were removed." Third, the Applicant further amends independent claim 1 to include the limitations of canceled claim 3, namely "forming a second photoresist structure in a central region over the read sensor layers; and etching the read sensor layers such that the end portions of the read sensor layers are removed and a central portion remains underneath the second photoresist structure, to thereby define a trackwidth for the read sensor." Last, the Applicant further amends independent claim 1 to include an additional limitation with support in the originally filed specification (Page 9, Lines 3-4, for example), namely "[r]emoving the protective layer through etching."

The prior art of record alone or in combination must teach or suggest each and every claim limitation. The prior art of record – alone or in combination – does not teach

that which is claimed in the present application. Specifically, the prior art alone and in combination fails to teach the steps of “[f]orming a protective layer over a plurality of read sensor layers,” then “[f]orming an insulator around the read sensor where the end portions were removed,” followed by “[r]emoving the protective layer through etching,” in such order. Therefore, based on the above, the Applicant submits that amended independent claim 1 is allowable over the prior art of record. Subsequently, pending dependent claims 2, 4, 6, and 8-11, are also allowable over the prior art of record.

Regarding Claims 12-22 Only. First, the Applicant amends independent claim 12 to include the limitations of canceled dependent claim 19, namely “[f]orming a first protective layer over a plurality of read sensor layers”, and “[f]orming a second protective layer around the central portion.” Second, the Applicant further amends independent claim 12 to include a previously unclaimed limitation with support in the originally filed specification (Page 9, Lines 3-4, for example), namely “[r]emoving the first and the second protective layers through etching.”

The prior art of record alone or in combination must teach or suggest each and every claim limitation. The prior art of record – alone or in combination – does not teach that which is claimed in the present application. Specifically, the prior art alone and in combination fails to teach “[f]orming a first protective layer over a plurality of read sensor layers”, and “[f]orming a second protective layer around the central portion.” Therefore, based on the above, the Applicant submits that amended independent claim 12 is allowable over the prior art of record. Subsequently, pending dependent claims 13-16, 18, and 21-22, are also allowable over the prior art of record.

Regarding Claims 23-30 Only. In regards to claims 23-30, please see the discussion in relation to independent claims 1 and 12 above. Based on the above, the Applicant submits that amended independent claim 23 is allowable over the prior art of record. Subsequently, pending dependent claims 24-30, are also allowable over the prior art of record.

Based on the above, the Applicant submit that all pending claims are allowable over the prior art of record and that the present application is now in a condition suitable for allowance.

Thank you. Please feel free to contact the undersigned if it would expedite the prosecution of the present application.

Respectfully Submitted,


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